

like the nightmare parents around this country have felt too often in the last few years. My absence was necessary for me to support a cause in which I believe. But my absence should not confuse the fact that my beautiful children—God's greatest gift to me ever—are more important than any cause. I hope, Mr. Speaker, that my children and the children of all who serve in public life will understand that our motivation is to provide our children and all children with a loving and supportive community free of violence. Although no gift can replace our presence with those we love, I hope that our legislative efforts produce the gifts of a community worthy of the sweetness and innocence of our children.

I thank my family for understanding that I must perform these duties and I reaffirm my love for Jacquelyn and Josie and their mother, in gratitude for the sacrifices they make.

A TRIBUTE TO PASTOR WALTER J. KEISKER, OF CAPE GIRARDEAU COUNTY, MISSOURI, IN CELEBRATION OF A CENTURY OF BLESSINGS

HON. JO ANN EMERSON

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, June 18, 1999

Mrs. EMERSON. Mr. Speaker, on July 9, 1999, Reverend Walter J. Keisker will celebrate his 100th birthday. As an active member of his community, Reverend Keisker is as well known in Cape Girardeau County, Missouri as many of the founding fathers of the towns of Jackson and Cape Girardeau.

Pastor Keisker started his life in 1899 on a farm four miles outside of Hillsboro, Missouri where his father ran a small creamery and, later, raised dairy herd and hogs. To this day, the Reverend remembers the words to "A Surrey With the Fringe on Top" because his family actually traveled in one.

The Reverend attended high school and junior college at St. Paul College in St. Louis, graduating in 1919. He then continued his education at Concordia Lutheran Seminary from which he graduated in 1923. He led his first parish at Trinity Church in Flat River, now Park Hills, Missouri where he devoted 15 years of service. In the fall of 1938 Pastor Keisker took on a new parish at the St. Paul Lutheran Church in Jackson, Missouri. He gave his parish his full attention for the next 30 years. As Pastor Keisker eased into retirement, he continued serving St. Paul Lutheran Church as a pastoral assistant from 1968 until 1984. The Reverend continued to be actively involved in the church until 1993 when he moved to the Lutheran Home in Cape Girardeau.

Reverend Keisker and the former Mae Fikuart of Farmington, Missouri, married and had two daughters, Ruth Illers of Jackson, Missouri, and Virginia Goodwin of Cape Girardeau, Missouri. The Reverend and Mrs. Keisker had seven grandchildren and as of this spring, Pastor Keisker has ten great grandchildren. Mrs. Keisker passed away in 1992.

Because he believes that a pastor should be active in their communities as well as over his congregation, Pastor Keisker remains active today. He continues to be a member of

the Cape Girardeau Historical Society and the Jackson Chamber of Commerce, and he attends Circuit meetings and other events in his community.

When asked about his secret for longevity, Pastor Keisker gives the following pieces of advice: "I think the Lord intended for us to enjoy life, so keep yourself occupied; Don't go out with the owls at night. They don't keep the right kind of company anyway; always be grateful for what you have; Be yourself and don't try to imitate someone you think is doing a good job. Try to do the job yourself, but please don't mimic.

These are sage words of advice from a centenarian who has lived a life devoted to God, family, and community, who has seen and reflected on a century of change in our nation and the world, and who has selflessly given of himself to all he has known. I would like to extend a heart-felt thank you to Pastor Keisker for all that he has done and continues to do for our communities. He is truly an inspiration to us all.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. PETER A. DeFAZIO

OF OREGON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, June 18, 1999

Mr. DeFAZIO. Mr. Speaker, I requested a leave of absence for June 22 and 23, 1999. As ranking member on the House Coast Guard Subcommittee, I have been invited to participate in a global shipping conference in the Netherlands to discuss shipping safety issues.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. HOWARD P. (BUCK) McKEON

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, June 18, 1999

Mr. McKEON. Mr. Speaker, on rollcall No. 221, I was present, but was not recorded as voting. I should have been recorded as voting "yea."

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. DENNIS MOORE

OF KANSAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, June 18, 1999

Mr. MOORE. Mr. Speaker, on June 14, 1999, due to a line of powerful, late afternoon thunderstorms that knocked out power to almost 40,000 homes in northern Virginia and caused the closure of Reagan National Airport runways, the airplane on which I was traveling was diverted to Richmond, Virginia, for refueling. As a result, my arrival in Washington, D.C., was delayed by over two hours and I missed rollcall vote #204 on the Bond Price Competition Act. Had I been present, I would have voted "aye."

PARENTING IS KEY

HON. SPENCER BACHUS

OF ALABAMA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, June 18, 1999

Mr. BACHUS. Mr. Speaker, recently the Birmingham News published an article by three faculty members from the University of Alabama at Birmingham. This article, written by Bill Crunk, associate professor of counseling, and by Solange Ribeiro and Julie Russell, who are both counselors at UAB's Office of Professional Services, is insightful and worthy of attention. That's why I want to share it now with my colleagues in Congress and place it in the RECORD. Their research confirms that parenting is the key to raising good children. Additionally, they have found four common components necessary to raise a child in today's often violent environment: Spirituality, Ability, Fairness and Encouragement.

There have been several high profile tragedies involving children recently, and we read so many of the headlines in today's newspapers and ask, "Why?" Many are quick to fix the blame for these tragedies on guns or on the media. The hard truth is that parenting is the core of a child's moral and social development. That is the point of the article written by these three members of UAB's faculty and it is one we should remember, again and again. I thank Professor Crunk and Counselors Ribeiro and Russell for their work and for their perceptive article, which I now place in the RECORD in its entirety.

[From The Birmingham News, May 2, 1999]

AFTER THE MOURNING—ARE WE REALLY COMMITTED TO WHAT IT TAKES TO IMPROVE PARENTING SKILLS FOR RAISING BETTER CHILDREN?

(By Bill Crunk, Solange Ribeiro and Julie Russell)

Far too frequently, headlines give accounts of children in trouble. Potentially delinquent behavior appears at earlier and earlier ages. Judges demand that parents get their children off the streets at night but fail to point out how to do it. Nationwide research in juvenile delinquency brings forth volumes of papers but few indications for possible solutions.

There is something deeper that is wrong. Underneath it all is the fact that we don't know what to do with our children, because the traditional methods of child-raising no longer work and we have not learned new methods which can take their place.—Rudolf Dreikurs, noted psychiatrist and author of *Children: The Challenge*, in 1964.

Parents today are faced with the challenge of raising a capable child in a violent society. With the tragic events in Colorado, the news media, educators, religious groups and other social institutions are all looking to find answers to the perplexing question, "How did this happen?"

Blame is being placed on the media, guns and schools, however, the fact remains that parenting is at the core of a child's moral and social development.

Research has shown that a child's behavior is a reflection of the home. Unfortunately, all too many families create an atmosphere in which a child has a strong belief of entitlement and a weak sense of responsibility.

Our research in the Birmingham community found that parents overwhelmingly feel a lack of communication between parents and children contribute to violence. We found that parents feel that an inability to

set limits, failure to teach empathy and compassion, failure to connect consequences to behavior, and a lack of moral education were all indicators of poor parenting.

Interestingly, parents realize that exposure to media violence desensitizes other children to violence but felt that their children could distinguish make-believe from real violence. Parents felt that they could help prevent exposure to violence but on the other hand were overwhelmed with raising children in today's society. All agreed that better parenting skills were needed, yet only half of the parents felt they should spend more time with their children.

On the other hand, our experiences in working with parents indicates that parents have given their parenting responsibilities to schools, day cares, government programs and others. Unbridled TV watching and computer use have put distance between the parent and his/her child. Parents are confused and worried, particularly when children seem to defy rules and mistake license to do whatever they please for freedom. They have a sense of losing control of their children. Dreikurs talked about this in 1964. More than 30 years have passed and we are still dealing with the same issues. Why?

Parenting takes time, effort and an understanding of children. Four components necessary in raising a capable child in today's environment are spirituality, ability, fairness and encouragement. These are the foundation of our SAFE parenting program.

SENSE OF EMPATHY

Spirituality, the most important task, is where a child learns values, empathy, purpose and morality. One consistent finding is that children who commit acts of violence lack a sense of empathy, respect and compassion for others.

The parent's task is to create a home environment that fosters belonging and a connection to the community through our sense of spirituality. If we avoid this parenting

task then we raise a child with a "self-centered me behavior."

Children also need to know that they have the ability to make decisions, and that along with these decisions come responsibilities. If parents fail to teach their children what freedom really means (choice, responsibility and consequence), then we foster children who take no responsibility for their actions and tend to blame others for their circumstances.

Fairness in the home creates a respect for order and cooperation. If children fail to learn fairness they develop a license to behave without respect for others.

Our fourth component of effective parenting, encouragement, teaches parents how to better communicate to their children that they have worth and ability to master life's challenges. Parents tend to lack skills in communication with their children. From our experience we know parents agree that communication with their children. From our experience we know parents agree that communication is extremely important in raising capable children.

Unfortunately, most communication is discouraging and directed at correcting or pointing out, a child's inability to meet expectations. Without encouragement, children become discouraged and find life tasks hopeless.

Dreikurs said it back in 1964: "Far too frequently, headlines give accounts of children in trouble." Are we, as a community, even interested in making an effort to reach parents? How many corporations are serious about their employees' families and the community that they support?

PARENTING CLASSES

Aon, a Chicago-based consulting firm, found that the most loyal employees worked for employers that encouraged a balance between family and job demands. How many places of business offer parenting classes during the workday? Government and school

systems say they want to do more, but do they?

How many school counselors are allowed to offer parenting classes at school or in the community as part of their duties? Shouldn't parents whose child is in trouble with family court or at school be required to take parenting classes to pay back to the community for having to take over the parents' responsibilities?

If we care about the child's welfare, why are divorcing parents not made to go to classes to understand the impact of such a decision on the child and how to develop parenting skills to offset some of the trauma?

How many churches require parents to participate in parenting courses? If we are all so concerned, how could parents refuse? Print and TV media have made millions off the tragedy in Colorado. Have you read or seen any sponsorship of efforts to improve parenting by the media?

And we ask the question, why? Will we be asking these questions 30 years from now? Hopefully these violent situations don't have to continue, but our responsibilities as parents do. We have a responsibility to our children to be good parents, and blaming the media, guns and schools won't accomplish what only we as parents can.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. ANTHONY D. WEINER

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, June 18, 1999

Mr. WEINER. Mr. Speaker, on rollcall No. 220, had I been present, I would have voted "no."